

REMARKS

Before entry of the amendments made herein, claims 1-17 were pending in the instant application, including independent claims 1, and 14. The examiner rejected claims 1-4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 17, and objected to claims 5-7, 9, 12, 15, and 16. As detailed below, Applicant has amended the claims such that each independent claim, including the newly presented independent claims, conforms to the examiner's indications of allowable subject matter. As such, Applicant believes that all claims 1-4, 6-13, 14, 16, 17, and 18-32 stand in condition for allowance. Detailed explanations of the claim amendments appear below.

Claim 5 Added to Claim 1 → Claims 1-4, 6-13

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Waizmann (U.S. Patent No. 5,592,879). However, the examiner indicated that claim 5, which depended directly from claim 1, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The limitation of claim 5 was added in its entirety to claim 1, and claim 5 was cancelled, leaving claims 2-4, and 6-13 depending from claim 1. Further, claim 13 was amended to address the examiner's indefiniteness rejection of that claim under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. As such, Applicant believes that claims 1-4 and 6-13 stand in condition for immediate allowance.

Claim 9 Added to Claim 1 → New Claims 18-29

The examiner further indicated that claim 9, which depended directly from the claim 1 contained allowable subject matter. Therefore, Applicant added new independent claim 18, which includes all the limitations of original claims 1 and 9. New claims 19-25 and 26-29 depend from new claim 18 and correspond to original claims 2-

8 and 10-13, respectively. Note that new claim 29 corresponds to amended claim 13, and the examiner's concerns regarding definiteness thus are addressed in this new claim set. Applicant thus believes that new claims 18-29 stand in condition for immediate allowance.

Claim 15 Added to Claim 14 → Claims 14, 16, and 17

Turning the rejection of independent claim 14 as being anticipated by Waizmann, Applicant notes that the examiner indicated that claim 15, which depended directly from claim 14, contained allowable subject matter. Applicant thus added the limitations of claim 15 to claim 14, and cancelled claim 15. Further, Applicant amended claim 17 to address the indefinite rejection made against it in conjunction with the same rejection of claim 13. Thus, Applicant believes that amended claim 14 and its remaining dependent claims 16 and 17 now stand in condition for immediate allowance.

Claim 16 Added to Claim 14 → New Claims 30-32

Similarly, Applicant notes that the examiner indicated that claim 16, which depended directly from claim 14, contained allowable subject matter. Applicant thus added the limitations of claim 16 to claim 14 to create the new independent claim 30. New claim 30 includes dependent claims 31 and 32, which correspond to original claim 15 and amended claim 17. Applicant thus believes that new claims 30-32 stand in condition for immediate allowance.

Conclusion

Upon entry of the amendments made herein, the instant application includes four sets of pending claims: set 1 comprising claims 1-4 and 6-13; set 2 comprising claims 14, 16, and 17; set 3 comprising claims 18-29; and set 4 comprising claims 30-32.

Each claim set is based on an independent claim that conforms carefully to the examiner's indications of allowable subject matter and it is believed that all claim sets stand in condition for immediate allowance. However, if the examiner has any concerns or believes there any remaining issues that would prevent the immediate allowance of the instant application, she respectfully is encouraged to call the undersigned agent.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Murphy", is written over a horizontal line.

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